

A CANINE BOARDING-SCHOOL—EDUCATION FOR DOGS.

The boarding-houses of New-York and vicinity were pretty thoroughly directed in a clever book, published a year or two ago, which gives a good idea of the way in which a man has his daily bread served up by his canine. No character of being established, from the sailor boarding-house of Cherry street, to the aristocratic mansion of Madison avenue, where the lady is induced to give a few gentlemen "all the comforts of a home, merely for the sake of their company"—from the opium-saturated den of the Chinese cigar sellers, to the perfumed parlors of the bachelor baker, escaped the observation of the sharp-eyed gastroscopic biographer. But did he think that boarding-houses are an evil incident only to human animals, and that landladies are an insupportable disposition of Providence for the exclusive chastisement of men and women? Did he never awake to the idea that even the canine race is thus afflicted, and that there are certain boarding establishments designed for "Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart, the little dogs and all"—where no daily dinner is provided for man—where canine only feeds, while human looks hungry? As this field has not attracted the attention of more distinguished writers, be ours the task to first tell the world of the mysteries of a Dog Boarding-House. Gay dogs are they, who are thus provided for—there it is to eat, to drink, to be exceedingly merry, while, with the periodical retirement of the inevitable bill, have they naught to do. Who would not be a dog if so to be delivered from the tyranny of landlords as the thrall of boarding-house keepers? We would not purchase immunity from the weekly paying-off, at the cheap cost of a shiny collar and a jingling chain!

The establishment of which we are to speak is not in New-York, but New-Jersey, being situated four miles from Jersey City, on the old turnpike road toward Newark. The place is called the Halfway House, and the landlord thereof is named Oscar Sanford. And Oscar takes dogs to board, and Oscar, moreover, makes a good thing of it, sometimes as many as 30 regular canine boarders assembling round his quadrupedal table. It is by no means a new-fangled notion, for Oscar has himself been in the business for more than 20 years. He is a short, small man, clad in sturdy fashion; has a keen, observing eye, and sports a huge mustache. His manner is pleasant, and he impresses the observer as being a man of kindly heart, and the natural inference is that his hairy boarders are well taken care of.

The style of dogs at Mr. Sanford's establishment is elevated—no curs of low degree being tolerated. All his dogs are hunting dogs, highly prized by their owners, and some of them held at prices so high as to astonish people who have imbibed the notion that dogs are not property. Several of them are worth \$50 each, and none fall below \$15. Mr. Sanford once sold a setter for \$75, and no sooner was the bargain consummated, than an enthusiastic sportsman offered the buyer \$200 for his purchase, which offer was refused. One animal of unusual sagacity and wisdom was held by his owner at \$100, but at this moderate figure buyers were not plenty. Mr. Sanford gives his personal attention to the canine kitchen, and the food for his four-legged guests is dished up in the highest style of art by his own experienced hands. The routine is as follows: As soon as they wake from their peaceful slumbers, which they generally do at a pretty early hour, say 5 a. m., they are turned loose in a small park of three-quarters of an acre, when they are permitted to run and romp for half an hour, being incited to active exercise by the exertions of a small boy, who also has instructions to allow no friendly fighting among his little flock. They are then brought in to partake of a plentiful breakfast consisting of mush and milk, of which they have all they choose to eat. In fact, this homely but wholesome dish is the staple of their food. In summer they have no meat whatever, as it has been found to make them feverish and cause the loss of their keenness of scent, but in the colder season they are caravally indulged, and have meat once a day, at night. In summer they breakfast at 6, in winter, at 8. They are allowed all the water they want. After breakfast they are permitted to romp about till noon in close quarters—at noon they are fed again, after which they have an hour's run over the fields, always under the supervision of the attendant. At sundown they are fed again, after which they retire to their various beds and forget the world till morning.

The terms are, 50 cents a week for board, washing, lodging, and attendance, and of course the high price secures the presence of only those animals which hold an aristocratic rank in the world, common curs not being able to stand the pecuniary pressure. The elect and chosen ones of the canine society of New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania, are here, together with a sprinkling of the chivalry from New-Orleans. Political differences are comparatively unknown. North and South dwell amicably together—the most perfect freedom of bark is tolerated, and as yet there has been no instance of the untimely slaughter of a Northern dog for the utterance of a Lincoln and Hamlin yelp, nor has any Southern animal come to sudden grief by reason of a Breckinridge howl.

It must be by no means supposed that Mr. Sanford's attentions to his affectionate flock cease when he has provided them with food and lodging; by no means. Mr. S. is not only their caterer, their bountiful provider, but also their guide, philosopher, and friend. In education, he undertakes all the details of their complete education. Under his fostering care, a worthless whelp rises to the level of usefulness, and becomes an industrious, self-supporting animal; a developer of the resources of the country. Schooled by his patient hand, an ignorant puppy in due time becomes a miracle of wisdom after the fashion of dogs; is competent to earn his own living, and therefore entitled to take an honorable place among the workers of the world. Ignorant puppies with two legs only, Mr. Sanford does not condescend to educate—more the pity.

Only in the canine fine arts does Mr. S. instruct his pupils. He only teaches them the mysteries of bird shooting, and their proper part in that popular sport. He does not teach them to turn spits, doubtless because we have no spits to turn; nor does he show them how to employ their muscles for the good of society, in the exercise of drawing garbage carts. Those vulgar pursuits are only suited to low-bred curs, whose plebeian blood would ever forbid their admission into the aristocratic establishment of the Halfway House. Canine children begin their education at rather an earlier age than those of the race homo, a dog being old enough to be put to school at one year of age, though his progress will be more satisfactory if he postpone his A B C till he has reached the ripe age of two years. An animal of average quickness of comprehension will complete his education in eight or nine months. It is hardly necessary to say that the use of a dog to a sportsman is to discover, by his keenness of scent, the whereabouts of the birds, and then, when the attention of the man is drawn to the "point," to slowly move on to the word, and "flush" or "scare" up the birds, which are shot on the wing. None but pot-hunters ever shoot a bird at rest. The dog must range or "quarter" the field systematically, so as to leave no part of it unsearched—he must not flush the game until his master is prepared for a shot, and he must find and bring in the dead bird, which is called "retrieving." The various words of command are "go on," "stop," "down charge," etc., all of which the thoroughly educated dog will obey with complete intelligence. It follows that the quadruped in the academy of Mr. Sanford are for the most part pointers, setters, and retrievers. Young dogs are taught to point dead birds; their practice on the living game begins in the Spring, when the snipe first come in. When a dog will hunt snipe, quail, partridge, and woodcock, he is considered educated, and straightway receives from the hand of Mr. Sanford a diploma and the highest honors. A dog may be a good hunter till he has attained the venerable age of twelve years, but

when so very old his speed generally becomes impaired, though his recent remains good as ever. The natural qualifications required by Mr. Sanford in a pupil are speed and a good nose, by which he means natural keenness of scent. These two conditions being answered, he engages to do the rest. For the complete education of a scholar, the price is \$50, with fifty cents per week extra for board.

In addition to his other cares, Mr. Sanford undertakes the physician's duty, and is responsible for the health of his interesting family. He has never had a dog go mad in all his 20 years experience, and he will undertake to cure any dog of the mange, and guarantee a perfect restoration of his hair. With which two instances of his knowledge both of prevention and cure we dismiss the medical part of the subject.

Mr. Sanford's skill with the gas is matter of history, and yet he has never sold \$10 worth of birds in the course of a long and active life. He holds that a pot-hunter is not fit to break dogs and as he desires nothing to detract his attention from the best training of his pupils, he never shoots for the market.

With a concluding remark, we leave the subject. The final touch to the perfect work which Mr. Sanford makes of the education of his beloved pupils is to make them recognize the one only rule of honor that obtains among canine aristocrats. This rule is: When two dogs are ranging a field, and one makes a point, the other should instantly stop in his tracks and back his ally, that is, point in the same direction. Should the second dog range ahead and flush the birds his coadjutor had first pointed, he would cover himself with merited disgrace, and remain a dishonored dog forever. To thoroughly impress upon the minds of his pupils this fact, and so save them from humiliating perfidy, Mr. S. so outrageous a breach of canine courtesy, is the crowning care of Prof. Sanford of the Dog Academy, Halfway House, Jersey.

PARLOR FLOWER-CULTURE.

Persons who no refinement of taste often imagine that their parlors are most decorated when filled with gorgeous furniture, carpets, and gaudy pictures. Hence the painful splendor which prevails in the houses of our fashionable families. The French, however, possessing no much delicate appreciation of the beautiful, cause their rooms, however poorly furnished, to possess a certain charm, which is a wonder to the vulgar palate of other nations. The judicious selection of carpets, furniture-covering, wall-paper, and curtains with regard to harmony of color, make a room attractive and inviting, even if the several materials be inexpensive. A neat bookcase, or a set of hanging shelves, well filled with solid books go further toward furnishing an apartment than a bedizened cabinet of ornate, or an elaborate set out with bits of mirrors, and filled with little trinkets. A cage of singing birds, a small aquarium, or a Warden case, confers more pleasure upon host and visitors, than a wall full of costly frames enclosing the cheap dabs of the auction shops. So, too, a group of blooming plants in the sunlight of a window, is a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

The great trouble of our would-be flower-growers has been to rear plants in the dry air of the room, and at this evil has been much aggravated since the introduction of that modern household pest, the hot-air furnace. The Warden case, having an atmosphere of its own, with its diurnal evaporation of moisture by day and deposit of dew by night, is of course an exception to this rule; but these cases are too expensive for persons of small means, and liable to accident from the rough handling of children. In our emergency *The Horticulturist* comes to the rescue, and gives these valuable directions:

"We should be glad to do or say something to increase the number of those who grow room plants. It is true that plants cannot be as well grown in rooms as in a well constructed greenhouse; but, notwithstanding, there are some kinds that may be grown and flowered in a manner quite satisfactory, and with results highly gratifying. Certain conditions must be complied with, but these are in our object to point out. The greatest obstacle to success is the dryness of the air: this may be a measure to overcome by a table suitably constructed, and the selection of plants well adapted to a dry atmosphere. The table should be of the length of the window, and two or three feet wide, the boards being tongued and grooved. Around the edge rail a strip three inches wide, making the corners fit tight. The table is then to be filled with two inches of clean white sand. With a table of this kind, the foliage of the plants can be frequently syringed, or sprinkled with water, which keeps them clean and promotes their health; the drippings and surplus water are caught and absorbed by the sand and the floor of the room is thus kept clean; the sand, indeed, ought to be kept constantly wet, and even watered for purposes of irrigation. It is important that the plants be kept in a position among the plants and through the room, and thus overcome, in a small degree, one of the chief obstacles to the successful culture of plants in rooms. The table should be fitted with rollers, to facilitate the length of the window, and the plants and pots should be moved from time to time, so that they may be exposed to the sun during very cold nights. The flower-stands in common use are altogether unfit for a room; the surplus water, dead leaves, &c., fall to the floor, injuring the carpet, and giving the room an untidy appearance. 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